

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A computer-based system for supporting negotiations with any number of variables and any number of parties. After negotiation variables are created, each negotiating party defines preferred outcomes and associated relative importances for each variable. A neutral site where parties have access only to their own private information and that which other parties share with them manages confidential information. Parties can then create proposals and other packages within those ranges, which may be visible to other parties or not, at their own option. In addition to exchanging conventional proposals in terms of actual values for the negotiation variables, parties may also exchange “reflected” proposals. When a proposal is reflected, what is proposed to another party is merely a rating representing the highest possible potential satisfaction level for that other party, given the reflected proposal, each party’s preferences and any constraints imposed on the problem. The proposed rating is generated by the negotiation system and is not revealed to the party submitting the proposal and may also be “blind” to the receiving party. If visible to the other party, the proposed rating may also be associated with a package of actual values for the negotiation variables to assist that party with evaluation. When the rating produced by a reflected proposal is accepted by another party, whether visibly or implicitly in a blind bidding system, then a unique visible package of actual values for the negotiation variables is generated by the negotiation system, which would produce for each party at least as much satisfaction as they have indicated acceptable. Two or more parties reach an agreement when they accept the same visible package.